

What's Typical?

Summary:

Students respond to surveys and the data are collected and distributed to groups. Students organize and represent the data. They write a summary statement using mean, median, or mode to describe what is typical about the group based on the data.

Materials:

- Personal Data Survey for each student
- Two Data Sheets for each student
- Newsprint
- Markers
- Envelopes
- 1 pair of scissors for each student
- rulers (have available)

In Advance:

1. The "class" will be divided into groups of four for the activity. You'll need one envelope and a sheet of newsprint for each group. (The materials provided will accommodate up to 10 groups of 4.)
2. Prepare copies of the "Data Sheet" and "Personal Data Survey" for each student.

Directions:

1. Have students complete their copy of the "Personal Data Survey" without sharing their answers. Also have them cut apart their copy of the "Data Sheet."
2. Students transfer answers from their survey to the corresponding pieces of the "Data Sheet."
3. Distribute a lettered envelope to each group. (Extras may be saved and distributed to groups who finish quickly.)
4. Groups order and list the data from their envelope.
5. Using markers and newsprint, each group represents the data using an appropriate graphical representation. They write a statement that uses mean, median, or mode to reflect what is typical for the class. Additionally, they write a justification for their use of the measure.
6. Groups post their graphs and statements.
7. Students examine the various graphs and summary statements.
8. In a whole class discussion, pose questions such as:
 - How did you come to your decision regarding the kind of graph you used to represent your data?
 - Did you have several representations that would have been appropriate? If so, which ones?
 - How does the kind of data affect the type of graph you would use to display the data?